



Bearsted Parish Council

Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at Madginford Hall, Egremont Road on Thursday 26th September 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Carolyn Smith (Chair) Cllr Pat Catt
Cllr Richard Ash MBE Cllr Frank Jagger

Also, in attendance was the Clerk, Joanne Upton, one member of the Cricket Club and one resident.

Reports from members of the public

The member of the Cricket Club requested a review into the schedule with the grounds maintenance contractor as some works were not completed this year.

1. Declarations of intention to record.

The Clerk declared that the meeting would be recorded for minuting purposes.

2. Apologies and absences

Apologies and reasons were duly noted for Cllr's Jodie Pottage and Denis Spooner.

3. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

There were none declared.

4. Signing of the Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes from 25th June 2024 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

5. Clerk report

The Clerk advised the office is working on quotes for fencing at Church Lane Allotments on the car park side so if agreed can be budgeted for next year.

Cllr Ash proposed to bring item 8c forward, this was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.

8c. Cricket Club: The Committee asked the visiting Cricket Club member for more information on practice sessions. These occur three times per week during the cricket season, more balls in use than when a game is in play and potentially need to close the whole field to ensure safety same as when a match is in play. The Committee advised that it is not practical to close the whole field several times a week during the summer as this is a facility for all users of the Green. It was agreed the Committee will review the Club's existing risk assessment that covers match play and work with the Club to provide a risk assessment and procedures for practice sessions.

ACTION:CLERK

6. Church Landway/Church Lane Car Park (Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s57(1)(a) and LGA 1972s126)

Anti-Social Behaviour: it was agreed that we will proceed with looking at a consultant to help investigate solutions for the car park.

ACTION:CLLR SMITH/CLERK

Cllr Jagger advised that a brief outline of the new specification for the drainage had been received from Evans & Langford and the full specification should be received in time for Full Council meeting in October. BPC will then go out to tender for quotes for both specifications.

ACTION:CLLR JAGGER

7. **General Maintenance** (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10 and Highways Act 1980 s96)

- a) Community Payback Scheme: The Committee agreed on the next visit the footpath from the car park to the Memorial Hall be cleared and also continue working at the CL Allotment site, removing any items against the fences. BPC needs to offer the CPS service to the Street Allotment holders.

ACTION:OFFICE

- b) Grounds Maintenance: The Committee reviewed a draft copy of a specification document and contract. It was agreed for contractors to price per job and have a schedule of rates & a schedule of works. Currently only two contractors willing to price.

ACTION:CLERK

- c) Holy Cross Church Graveyard: The Clerk explained that the Church are looking to close a second section of the graveyard, the Church can then apply to pass this to the Parish Council who are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of this area. It was agreed BPC needs to meet with the Church to understand the needs and requirements of maintenance.

ACTION:CLERK/CLLR SMITH

- d) Skip Hire Costs: The Clerk requested a skip to clear the shed at the CL Allotment site and items from the Parish Office Shed. There is an additional £60 fee for placing skip on Council owned land and there is a risk of fly tipping. Cllr Jagger proposed to accept the Reliable Skips quote at £222 but have it collected on the same day to prevent fly tipping. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION:CLERK/CLLR SMITH

8. **Bearsted Green** (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)

- a) Road Drain Cover: The Clerk advised that the request for crisscross style covers had to be done on the 'report a problem' page on the KCC website and no response has been received yet. Cllr Jagger requested we find out where on the cleaning schedule this is and for the drain gully on Church Lane.

ACTION:OFFICE

- b) Defibrillators: The Clerk explained the advice given is that the defibrillator should be in a climate-controlled box which would be too large and heavy for the phone box, which is not accessible either. Due to their being defibs at the train station, White Horse, Bearsted & Thurnham Club and the WI, Cllr Jagger proposed not to replace the defib in the phone box, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour. Investigate possible locations on the Ashford Road.

ACTION:OFFICE

- c) Cricket Club: this item has already been discussed.

- d) The Pond: Cllr Jagger advised he met with one contractor who has confirmed the filtration system does not work as intended as will not filter chemicals coming in from road surface water, it just removes solids. Work needs to be done on the Bullrushes as they pose a threat to the lining of the pond. It was agreed to wait until Medway Valley Countryside Partnership have completed their workday to remove vegetation.

ACTION:CLLR JAGGER

9. **Allotments** (Small Holding and Allotment Act 1908 ss23,25)

- a) CL Replacement padlock: Cllr Smith proposed to accept the Timpson cost of £183.95 +VAT to replace the padlock so the existing keys can be used. This was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION:DEPUTY CLERK

- b) Contract: The Committee reviewed a draft version of a new contract for allotments holders, once completed with input from the Allotment Association, the Council will take a vote on adopting the new contract.

ACTION:OFFICE

10. Open Spaces (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)

a) Planters:

- i. Planting & Maintenance: Cllr Jagger thank Lauren White for her work on the quote comparison table. Cllr Catt proposed to accept the quote from Green Stripe Garden Services at £384 per year to plant and maintain 3 large planters and 2 small planters around the village. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with 3 in favour and 1 abstention.
- ii. Repair Costs: Cllr Catt proposed to accept the quote of £286 from Lee Harrison to repair the broken planter outside Marinos. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with 3 in favour and 1 against.

ACTION:OFFICE

- b) Elizabeth Harvie Field Fencing: The Committee deferred this item as need to obtain welding quotes.
- c) Spot Lane Nature Reserve: This item was deferred in the absence of Cllr Spooner.
- d) Medway Valley Countryside Partnership: The Clerk advised 3 workdays for Meadow Bank and 1 for the pond will take place throughout October and November. The Clerk will email out dates and this is advertised on the website and via Facebook.

ACTION:OFFICE

11. Benches

- a) Asset Inspection: Cllr Turner's asset inspection identified two benches on the Green that require work to damaged legs. The Committee decided that this level of work is uneconomical, and BPC should attempt to contact the residents who commissioned the benches to see if they want to replace them.

ACTION:OFFICE

- b) Asset Inspection Frequency: The Clerk requested the Committee to consider inspections on benches to be twice yearly rather than quarterly to enable reviews and work to be carried before the next inspection is due. The Committee agreed to 6 monthly inspections.

12. Budget 2025/2026

Items to be considered for next year's budget include the wooden wall on the Green, posts on the Green, CL Allotment fence, benching budget.

13. Biodiversity Net Gain Training

Cllr Ash updated the Committee on the training, advising all larger projects must have an assessment carried out and must replace any lost biodiversity by increasing it either on site or in another area.

14. Future Agenda Items

Allotments
Pond repairs
Community Pay Back Scheme
Church Lane car park
Ground maintenance contract
Road drain gullies
Budget review

15. Date of next Meeting, 26th November 2024

There being no further business to transact, the meeting ended at 21:21pm

Signed.....Date.....